

# NHB/NMRTC Bremerton *Caduceus*

## *A Monthly Recap of info, insight & issues for March, 2022*



### **Sailors Meritoriously Advanced at NMRTC Bremerton**

*By Douglas H Stutz, NHB/NMRTC Bremerton public affairs officer* -- By the time Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Kaleesha Ramos completed a phone call – during maternity leave - from Navy Medicine Readiness Training Command Bremerton leadership, she had added another notable accomplishment to her burgeoning career.

She became hospital corpsman first class.

Ramos was advanced in her chosen rate to the next highest paygrade as part of the Navy's Meritoriously Advancement Program (MAP) and was a direct reflection, along with culmination, of her being chosen as Naval Medical Forces Pacific Sailor of the Year for Fiscal Year 2021.



“The quota received was less than anticipated, which made the selection process really competitive. Those selected consistently performed at a higher level and are now charged with leading from example for others to follow,” said Capt. Patrick Fitzpatrick, NMRTC Bremerton commanding officer.

Along with Ramos, advancing in rate to Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class were Tyler Clayton and Jose Rico, to Master-at-Arms 2nd Class was Mackenzie Razo, and promoted to Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class were Grace Corn and Gunner Haskill.



MAP authorizes commanding officers to advance eligible enlisted Sailors in paygrades E5 and below to the next higher paygrade.

MAP also provides leadership the opportunity to acknowledge those personnel who have demonstrated they are ready for the next level of responsibility by advancing them in rate.

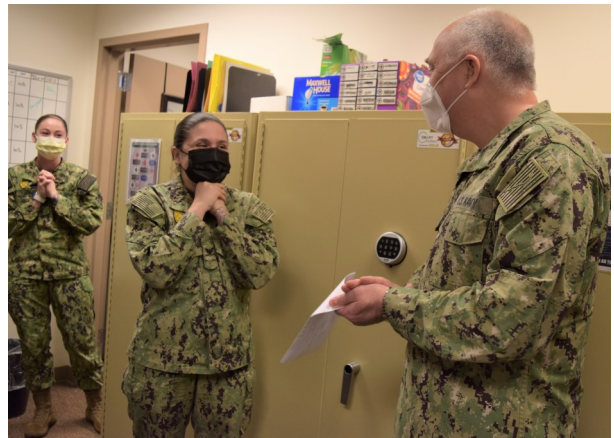
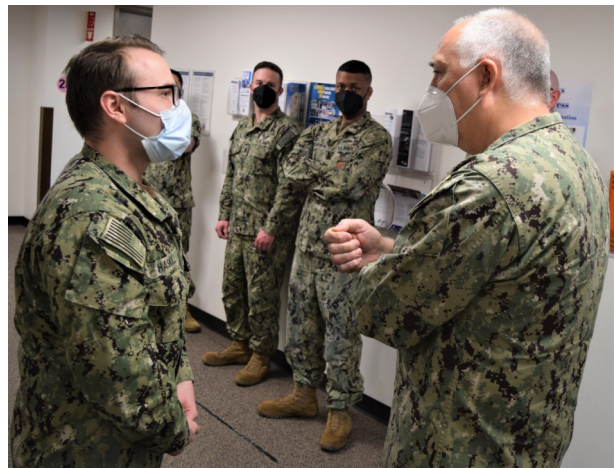


The program also grants greater authority to individual commands to better structure their manning levels, and overall help the Navy to continue developing and rewarding talented Sailors.

According to Senior Chief Culinary Specialist Kevin Flatley, acting command master chief, those advanced to their appointment to the next highest paygrade in the United States Navy makes them heir to the tradition of naval leadership.

By accepting the appointment, they are charged with demonstrating those standards of performance, moral courage, and dedication to the Navy and the nation which may serve as an enviable example to their fellow Navy men and women.

“For each Sailor we advanced today, they also started to get paid in their advanced pay-grade,” added Flatley.



**Naval Hospital  
Bremerton *Caduceus* is an official  
Navy internal publication**

Capt. Patrick Fitzpatrick, NC, Commanding Officer  
Capt. Jeffrey Feinberg, MC (FS), Executive Officer  
CSSCS (SS) Kevin T. Flatley, Command Master Chief  
(Acting)



Reference: DoD Instruction 2000.16, October 2, 2006

## Lessening the Blast in the Past – TBI Support Down Range

*By Douglas H Stutz, Naval Hospital Bremerton Public Affairs* – It was during a jarring time some dozen years ago in volatile southern Afghanistan when Naval Hospital Bremerton supported from afar in treating traumatic brain injuries.

When the Concussion Restoration Care Center (CRCC) with a MRI (Magnetic Resonance System) was established at Camp Leatherneck, then part of Joint Operating Base and British-run Camp Bastion in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, there was a constant need to care for combat-related concussions.



During the first year of operation alone - August 2010 to September 2011 – there were approximately 700 new patients with some sort of head injury.

According to Cmdr. Peter Lundblad, NHB Family and Sports Medicine physician who deployed as the officer in charge of the CRCC, “It was designed (back then) to care for concussions, the number one most common combat related injury, and for non-surgical orthopedic patients, the top non-combat related injury.”

**NHB/NMRTC Bremerton Webpage:**  
<https://bremerton.tricare.mil/>

**NHB/NMRTC Bremerton Official Facebook site:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/naulhospitalbremerton>

**NHB on Defense Video Info Distro Service:**  
<https://www.dvidshub.net/tags/news/nmrtc-bremerton>

**NHB Command Ombudsman:**  
[nhb.ombudsman@gmail.com](mailto:nhb.ombudsman@gmail.com)

Arranging to have the sizable MRI machine down range was a huge logistical undertaking. Yet there was more to it than just connecting to a power source and flipping a switch to use.

With a mix of personal ingenuity and professional initiative to hasten the setup process, Lundblad reached back to his parent command for timely assistance to simply plug in advanced technology programs and standard operating

procedures to effectively run the machine.

“An MRI without appropriate examination protocols is like a computer without an operating system; it just does not work. Optimized examination protocols allow for MRI examinations that are appropriately tailored to each patient,” explained Lundblad.

Which is where the expertise of NHB MRI technologists Mr. Matthew Hodgson and Ms. Johanna Fanara came into the scene. Lundblad reached back to NHB’s Radiology department asking for their timely support to provide developed MRI programs to save time and help address the need for specialized evaluation and treatment of concussed service members.

“I was able to successfully send our exam [protocol] cards over for use on their system in Afghanistan. They downloaded to run without having to go through the trouble of building a database from scratch,” related Hodgson, adding that exam protocols are really a series of complex sequences that enable a technologist to acquire diagnostic data on specific anatomy details and a number of pathologies.

“We had already built the protocols here,” continued Hodgson “The majority we sent down-range concerned the primary types of bodily injuries they were dealing with, such as brain, spine, upper and lower extremities, and abdomen.”

Along with the protocols, NHB also forwarded essential forms on such subjects as quality control and environmental compatibility. All the documents were created by Fanara, including comprehensive standard operating procedures and detailed patient screening forms necessary to ensure patient safety.

By providing the timely support, the CRCC team use the MRI to instantly evaluate and treat mild TBI patients instead of having to send the service members out of theater to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany.

According to a 2014 study posted in the Association of Military Surgeons in the U.S., among 4,947 military personnel evaluated at the CRCC between August 2010 and May 2013, 97.9 percent were returned to duty and retained in theater.

During Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, TBI was one of the leading wounds among troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. In large part, this was due to the enemy’s widespread use of improvised explosive devices, such as roadside bombs. Examples of a TBI ranged from an actual blow to the head to blast wave(s) penetrating brain tissue.

However, back then as now, it was not in a combat zone or deployment status that the most TBIs happened to service members.

It’s the exact opposite.

“The majority of service members and veterans experience traumatic brain injuries in a non-deployed setting, due to the nature of their training or participation in sports and leisure activities,” Lundblad said.

“We do see a fair share of mild TBI/concussion here on a continuous basis,” said Hodgson. “If there is a patient with perhaps a more severe concern, we’ll send them to Madigan Army Medical Center MRI annex with a more specialized MRI capability.”

What exactly is a TBI? The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury defines a traumatic brain injury as the result of a jolt to the head that disrupts the normal function of the brain.

However, not all blows or jolts to the head result in a TBI, and can range in severity from mild to moderate to severe. The most common form of TBI, especially in the military, is mild TBI, usually referred to as a concussion.

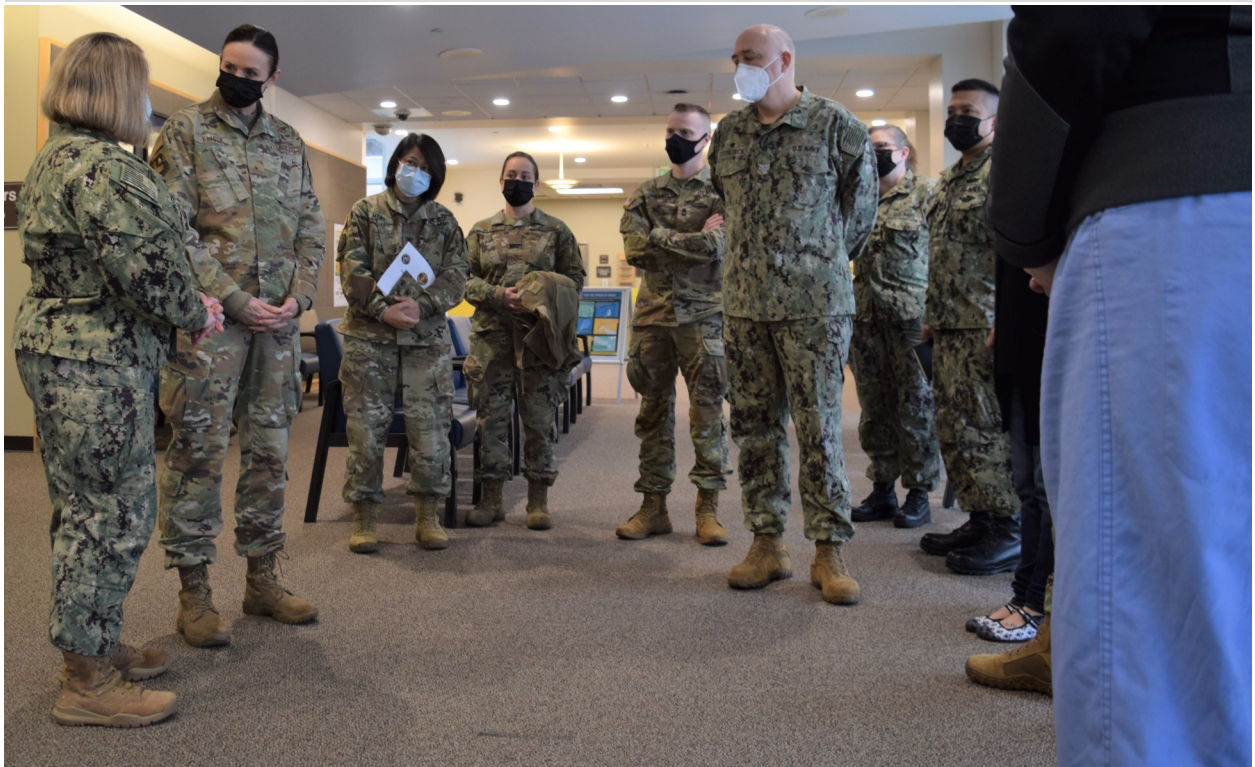
Compiled statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show more than 430,000 service members were diagnosed with TBI from 2000 to 2020.

“The reality is that awareness is everything in dealing with any type of head injury. A traumatic brain injury is not visible. But it is significant and can’t be minimized. Just taking aspirin is not going to really help,” said Lundblad.





*Air Force Brig. Gen. Anita Fligge, Defense Health Agency chief nursing officer, visited NHB, May 17, 2022, as part of her tour with Puget Sound Military Health System commands which also include Madigan Army Medical Center, Naval Health Clinic Oak Harbor and the Air Force's 62nd Medical Squadron. While at NHB, Fligge was provided an overview of the UCC (above) and met with Family Medicine staff (below). "I thank everyone for what you do, every day," shared Fligge (official Navy photos by Douglas H Stutz, NHB/NMRTC public affairs)*





## I Am Navy Medicine - Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Mackenzie D. Razo

*By Douglas H Stutz, NHB/NMRTC Bremerton public affairs officer -- Don't tell Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Mackenzie D. Razo what she can't do.*

The Ocala, Florida native is a driven, dedicated, and determined Sailor assigned to Navy Medicine Readiness Training Command Bremerton.



She's also a mother, spouse, and newly promoted MA2 via the command's Meritoriously Advancement Program.

"Words cannot describe how happy I felt in that moment. I was shocked. I was not expecting that to ever happen," said Razo, upon being told first hand from command leadership on her unforeseen promotion.

MAP authorizes commanding officers to advance eligible enlisted Sailors in paygrades E5 and below to the next higher paygrade and provides leadership the opportunity to acknowledge those personnel like Razo whom have demonstrated they are ready for the next level of responsibility by advancing them in rate.

NMRTC Bremerton's MAP quota for Fiscal Year 2021 was only five, which makes Razo selection out of approximately 450 enlisted personnel – with hospital corpsmen the overwhelming majority – even more notable.

"I work very hard every day to be the best that I can be and set a good example. Being selected means so much and that I am successful in what I am striving to do," Razo said, noting that immediately after she found out, she informed her now-retired former supervisor, Senior Chief Master-at-Arms James Carroll and family.

"I was incredibly happy to tell my family, husband and kids, but I really looked up to Senior Chief Carroll while he was in my chain of command. He is still close by and I could tell him that I made it," related Razo.

Since being assigned to NMRTC Bremerton in 2021, her work ethic and commitment to excel have been firmly centered on her family and career development.



“My Navy career began when I decided to enlist the end of my senior year in high school, and my Navy Medicine career hasn’t begun yet. I am currently completing college classes to apply for the Navy’s Medical Enlisted Commissioning Program,” explained Razo, a Forest High School 2017 graduate who is working towards her Bachelors in Sports and Health Sciences at American Military University.

Her interest in pursuing a commission in the Navy Nurse Corps is directly related to her son.

“My son was born prematurely. The respect and compassion shown to my family during the time that he was in the newborn intensive care unit lit a fire inside that made me want to be a nurse,” said Razo, acknowledging that her original career path was not Navy medicine.

“But after exploring all of my avenues and speaking to many of the nurses here at NMRTC Bremerton I decided it was the best route for me,” added Razo.

After she joined the Navy fresh out of high school she was ready and motivated to be a Sailor. Her master-at-arms training included learning about law enforcement techniques, anti-terrorism tactics and policies.

Her first duty station was Strategic Weapons Facility Pacific, working with Marine Corps Security Force Battalion Bangor.



There were professional trials and personnel ordeals. There were professional trials and personnel ordeals.

Razo struggled with traditional obstacles experienced by many pregnant women in the military; stereotypical perceptions from co-workers about her abilities, suspicions of trying to avoid duty,

Such obstacles did not dissuade her. If anything, it did manage to add fuel to her inner fire.

“I chose not to let the words get to me and pushed through the negativity. I made my time at NMRTC Bremerton count by getting involved in the command

and my community, learning more about the Navy, furthering my education, and taking on collaterals in my workspace to grow my leadership skills and responsibility,” Razo said. “My goal is to be successful for my family and be an example to other young female sailors that pregnancy does not mean a dead end career. Women are often told this as soon as a pregnancy is announced.”

“My current chain of command has been instrumental in my success with their support and recognition,” continued Razo. “I am grateful to be a part of a command where teamwork, respect and support is understood and reciprocated regardless of rank/race/gender. I am proud of what I have accomplished so far and look forward to what I will accomplish in the future alongside my shipmates.”

Razo and the rest of the command’s Security Department daily support and safeguard the Navy surgeon general priority of operational readiness.

“Working in hospital security means that helping ensure smooth operations every day by keeping the peace and finding resolutions to problems that involve security personnel when they arise. My job is to keep our staff and patients safe which ensures a ready medical force.

When asked to sum up her experience with Navy Medicine in one sentence, Razo replied, “This is a period of my life that I can, without a doubt, be proud of.”

## A Germ of an Idea for Patient Safety Awareness Week

By Douglas H Stutz, NHB/NMRTC Bremerton public affairs officer -- They're everywhere.

The dirty truth is they're unavoidable.

The uncomfortable reality is they can cause a world of hurt.

From countertops and cutting boards to television remotes and cell phones, the immediate world of many – sight unseen - has a host of germs readily intent on meeting anyone, anytime and anywhere.



To remind people of just how prevalent and pervasive germs are, in conjunction with National Patient Safety Awareness Week, Naval Hospital Bremerton presented a colorful exhibition highlighting the role of germs in daily life, for all staff and patient, as well as visitor.

According to Mayda Schaefer, command patient safety analyst and prime architect of the annual eye-catching and informative exhibition, NHB'S theme is a twist of the Department of Defense suggested theme, "Standardizing Safety Solutions: Uniting for Ready, Reliable Care," with 'Ready Reliable Germs...Uniting to meet you!'

"We tried to brighten up the theme by making the germs 'available' as dating options to make the week fun as well as educational. We wanted to add a bit of humor and interweave the important information with fun facts and good tips to help people remember better," explained Schaefer.

From explaining just what exactly germs are to how they can enter a person's body to where they come from, there was even a heart-shaped explanation detailing that there are four different germ types – bacteria, viruses, fungi and protozoa - some more dangerous and/or harmful than the next.

Since viruses and bacteria are the most common types of germs and sicken many, a descriptive host of amusing and unpleasant facts – "that will get you cleaning" – was shared about each, such as, the average office desk has 400 times more bacteria than a toilet handle; cell phone(s) have 10 times more bacteria than your toilet; a person is 1,000 times more likely to spread bacteria with damp hands; it takes one person with a virus just four hours to contaminate 50 percent of all the equipment and employees in the office; when two people smooch, they exchange between 10 million and one billion bacteria, and all the collective bacteria in a person's body weighs four pounds.

Yet all specifics about germs aren't negative. As a tasty example, it's noted that chocolate has an anti-bacterial



effect on the mouth and protects against tooth decay.

On display also were several notable – and communal - germs cast as cartoonish characters, including Bronchitis, the common cold, strep throat, influenza, pertussis, and of course, COVID-19.

There were tips provided on how to stop the spread of such germs, such as to avoid close contact with people who are at risk; cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw it away; avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth; clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces; stay home when sick, except to get medical care; and most important, wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer often.

“It’s important to learn about germs, so we can better understand how to protect ourselves, each other and our patients from the ones that could make us sick and easily spread in our healthcare environment and also our home (s),” Schaefer said.

Also held in conjunction with National Patient Safety Week was the command’s Performance Improvement Fair.

The annual campaign over the past dozen-plus years has gone to tropical, medieval, even Jurassic lengths of extravagant efforts to educate and even entertain to staff, patients and visitor on the importance of patient in the healthcare setting.

“As always, the work involved was a team effort and a reflection of all of my Quality Management co-workers and Lt. Cmdr. Shingmei Chang who led the Continuous Process Improvement Fair,” said Schaefer.

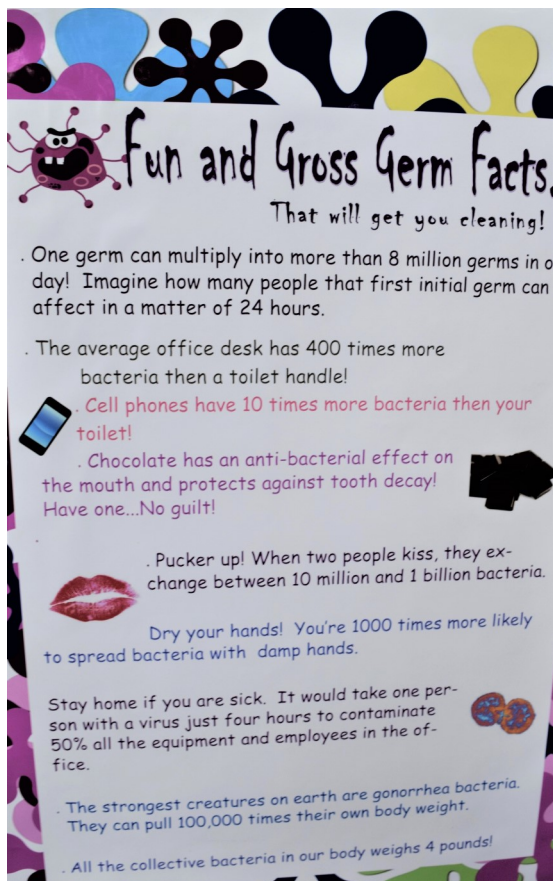
The CPI Fair showcased half a dozen submissions all predicated on making a measurable impact, sustainable benefit on either clinical or administrative practices and helped contribute to a culture of patient safety and high reliability. On display were: “Saving Supply-vate Ryan,” by Lt. Jason Balazs and Hospitalman Amy Crockett “Utilization of QFlow to Complete COVID Testing,” by Lt. Cmdr. Paul Flood and Lt. Caitlynn Barcheski “Increase Weight Loss Pre-Op to Improve Post-Op Outcomes in Bariatric Patients,” by Lt. Lorna Brown “Long Term Opioid Therapy Clinic Implementation,” by Lt Heather Walmer

“Reduced Dose CT Stone Protocol,” by Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Sonny Soriano

“Pharmacy Outpatient Fall Events,” by Ms. Catherine Udasco-Dunn

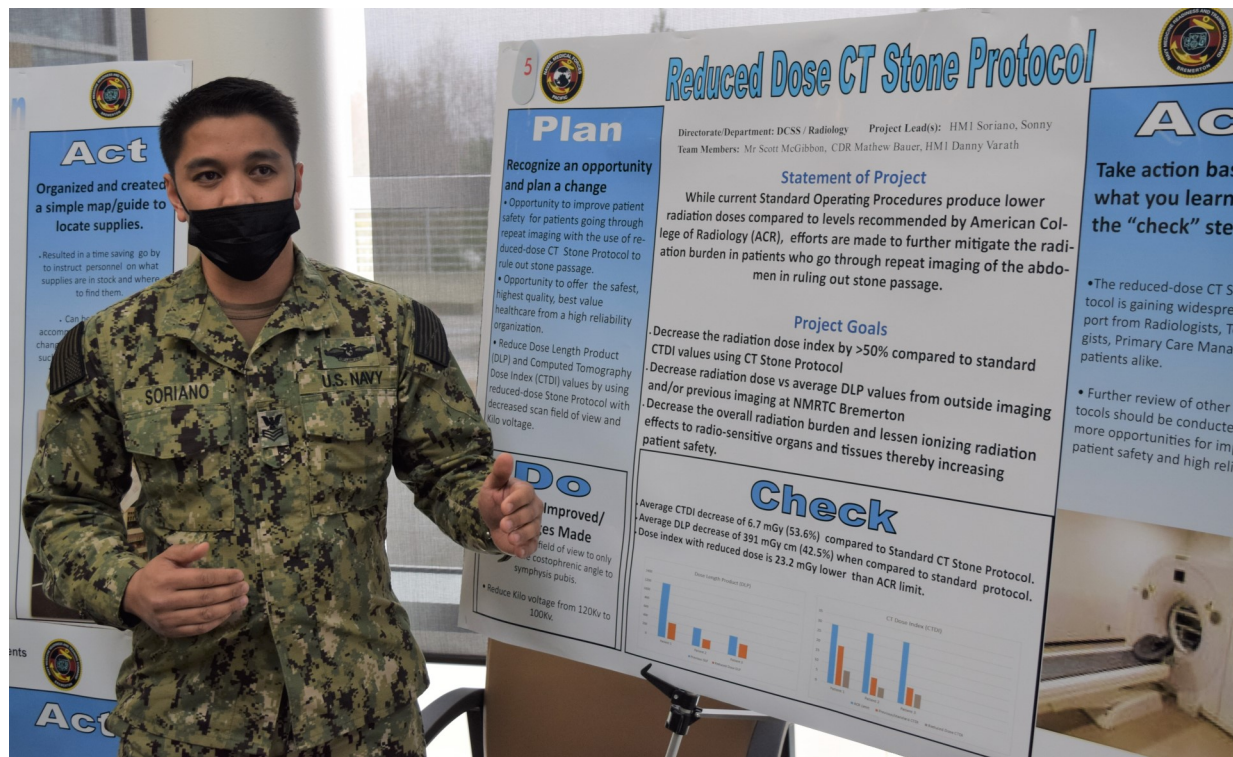
The National Patient Safety Awareness Week is an annual education and awareness campaign for healthcare safety.

Each year, health care organizations like NHB take part in the global event with the understanding that everyone in health care has a role in delivering safe care.



## Continuous Process Improvement Fair beneficial to all

By Douglas H Stutz, NHB/NMRTC Bremerton public affairs officer -- There was innovation, initiative and invention on display, with insight, information, and intelligence shared.

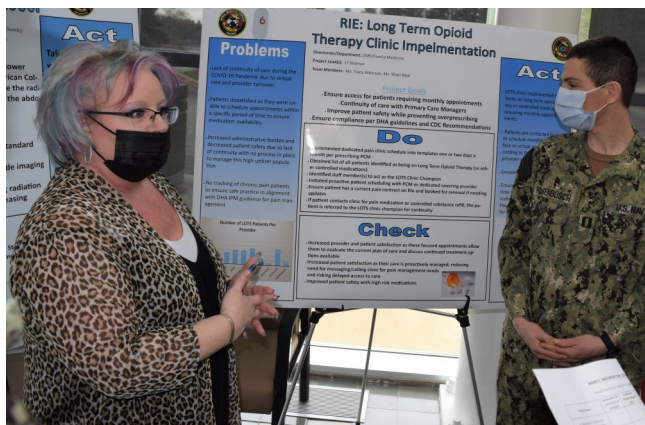


At the Continuous Process Improvement Fair held at Naval Medicine Readiness Training Command Bremerton, the collective efforts of six projects showcased a wide range of compelling and creative ideas to enhance patient support and empower staff members.

The projects also presented difficult choices to pick just one as an overall winner by command leadership and all those in attendance.

"This is really incredibly important and vital in regards to our patient safety and process improvement. Choosing the overall winner was hard," said Capt. Patrick Fitzpatrick, Naval Hospital Bremerton director and NMRTC Bremerton commanding officer.

The winners were announced March 25, 2022. Placing first overall was "Utilization of QFlow to Complete COVID Testing," by Lt. Cmdr. Paul Flood and Lt. Caitlynn Barcheski; second place went to "Saving Supply-vate Ryan," by Lt. Jason Balazs and Hospitalman Amy Crockett; with third place going to "Reduced Dose CT Stone Protocol," by Hospital Corpsman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sonny Soriano.



"All of these projects presented here are just fantastic. They are all proof that some of the best ideas for improvement don't originate at the executive level but from deckplate leadership and those who actually make it happen on a daily basis," remarked Capt. Jeffrey Feinberg, NHB/ NMRTC Bremerton executive officer.

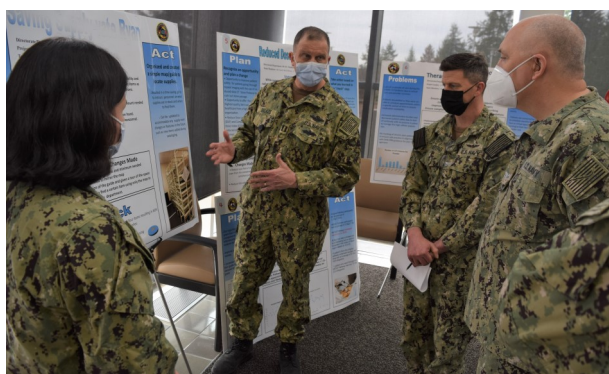


Honorable mention went to “Increase Weight Loss Pre-Op to Improve Post-Op Outcomes in Bariatric Patients,” by Lt. Lorna Brown; “Long Term Opioid Therapy Clinic Implementation,” by Lt Heather Walmer, presented by presented by Ms. Shari Neal and Ms. Tracy Atkinson; and “Pharmacy Outpatient Fall Events,” by Ms. Catherine Udasco-Dunn.

According to Lt. Cmdr. Shingmei Chang, NHB Process Improvement Sciences Lead, the ‘Continuous Process Improvement’ concept is based upon the DHA Ready Reliable Care principle, which is focused on reducing unwarranted variation across the system, eliminating waste, and lowering costs.



“NMRTC Bremerton benefits from CPI when every member can be a problem solver capable of leveraging improvement science,” said Chang, noting that CPI initiatives may include such ideas as implementing leading clinical improvements; developing strategic clinical partnerships; and improving and refining administrative and support processes.



“The CPI fair was held to recognize initiatives that improve NMRTC Bremerton and promote a culture of learning, sharing, and continuous improvement,” Chang added.

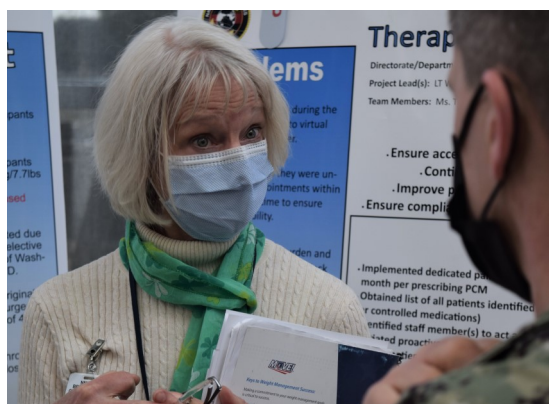
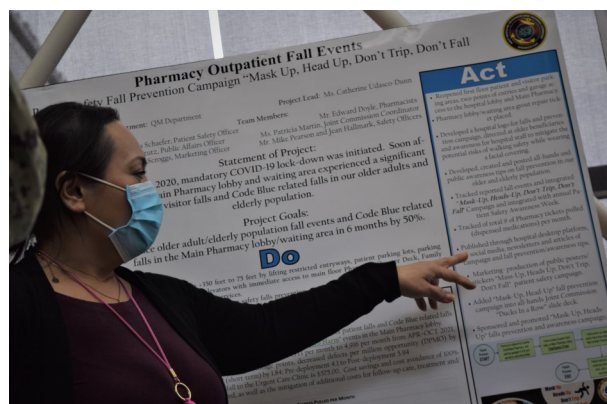
The benefits derived from the fair are numerous.

“Everyone benefits from an event like this,” explained Chang. “Hospital beneficiaries benefit from the positive impacts of these CPI projects in terms of better care access, improved patient safety, and improved quality of

care. Our staff benefit when wastes are reduced and workflow becomes safer and more efficient. It is also critical to empower our personnel at every rank and position to step forth with innovative and creative ideas to make things better. Lastly, the command as a whole benefits when our patients and staff are satisfied with their care and their work process.

Along with the static display poster board set up on the command’s quarterdeck, the fair this year also went virtual which enabled staff at the branch health clinics located on Naval Base Kitsap Bangor, Naval Station Everett and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard to participate and vote.

“We have had 34 people vote in person and 61 people voted virtually this year on the six projects on display, March 15-18, 2022,” Chang said. “It was truly motivating and energizing to see the commanding officer, executive officer and command master chief show interest and support for staff efforts in making changes. The submissions were all predicated on making a measurable impact, sustainable benefit on either clinical or administrative practices and helped contribute to a culture of patient safety and high reliability.”





### ***NHB Civilian of The Year***

*Meet Tracy R. Atkinson, Family Medicine Lead Medical Support Assistant and Template Manager.*

*“I am responsible for building templates and applying those schedules for the clinics in our directorate. In addition I manage the access and schedule for Family Medicine, to include up to 16 providers and over 10,000 beneficiaries. I also lead the team of Medical Support Assistants in our department.”*

*When asked why her position was important to the Navy and Navy Medicine, she replied, “I assists with smooth clinic workflow and appropriate access in service to our Active Duty members and their families. This has direct mission impact by ensuring the readiness of the fleet.”*





## **NHB Senior Civilian of The Year**

*Meet Dora Herman, Directorate Resource Management/Budget Department Financial Management Analyst.*

*In her capacity, she performs and advises on work in the cycle of budget administration, which includes formulating budget(s); estimates to support spend plans; presenting and defending budget estimates to higher authorities; reviewing/evaluating budget request; and controlling and reporting obligations and expenditures.*

*She also analyzes and recommends best course of actions in the effective and efficient methods of acquisition and use of funds that support NHB/NMRTC Bremerton.*

*When asked why her position was important to the Navy and Navy Medicine, she replied, “programs and funding are unstable and subject to change throughout the fiscal year.*

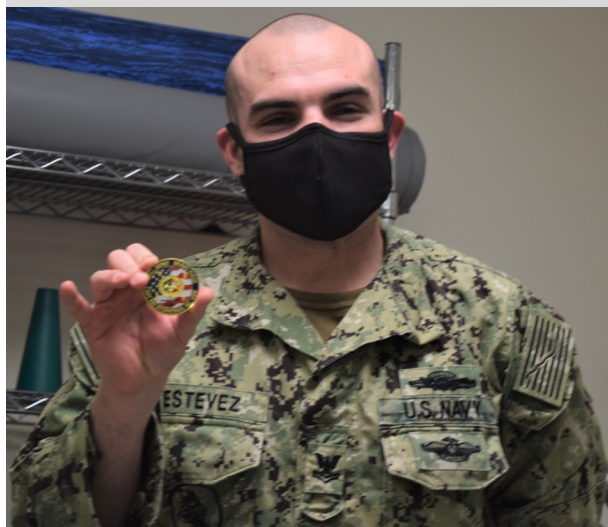
*“One major change includes the migration from Navy to Defense Health Agency (DHA) administrative, financial, and budgetary programs,” Herman continued.*

*“Part of my job is to assist program managers and other staff in interpreting the impact of and planning for financial and budgetary program changes.”*





Coined—BZ to HM2 Estevez for COVID Support!



## NHB/NMRTC Bremerton Scenes...



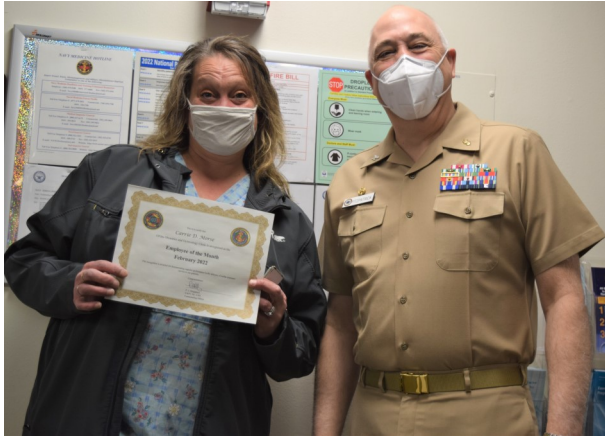
From Ash Wednesday...



...to surgical precision for the Medical Corps' 151th Birthday...














**The DAISY Award**  
FOR EXTRAORDINARY NURSES  
IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES

## Nomination Form

I would like to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ unit/department as a deserving recipient of The DAISY Award. This nurse's clinical skill and especially her/his compassionate care exemplify the kind of nurse that our patients, their families, and our staff recognize as an outstanding role model. She/he consistently meets all of the following criteria:

<p><b>COMPASSION</b></p> <p><i>Team Player/Mentor</i></p>	<p><b>Professionalism</b></p> <p><i>Exceptional Care</i></p>	<p><b>COMMITMENT</b></p> <p><b>Advocacy</b></p>
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Please describe a situation involving the nurse you are nominating that clearly demonstrates he/she meets the criteria for The DAISY Award:

RN Pichler teaches those around her to be a patient advocate. As a staff member I have seen her go above and beyond to make her patients feels safe and comfortable, resulting in positive patient outcomes. I was particularly impressed when I witnessed her triage by phone a reluctant patient, she guided them to as they were facing a tough medical and family situation. As a member of the health care team we can all learn from Rn Pichler's example. I have witnessed her explain difficult concepts to both new nurses and Corpsman. Our team is better with her presence.

Thank you for taking the time to nominate an extraordinary nurse for this award. Please tell us about yourself, so that we may include you in the celebration of this award should the nurse you nominated is chosen.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am (please check one): Patient/Family/Visitor \_\_\_\_\_ Staff/Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominations received will be entered into the current **DAISY Award** nomination pool

**Naval Medical Readiness Training Center Bremerton**

\*\* Display and distribution of this award program should not be construed as official endorsement of the DAISY Foundation by Madigan Army Medical Center, the Army, or the Department of Defense.